

# Armadillo Literary Gazette

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Acting Editor: Ron Edelstein  
Managing Editor: Don Drumtra  
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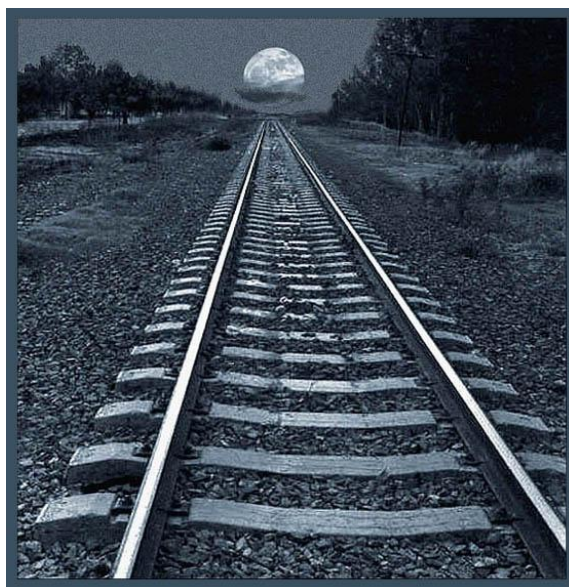
## EDITOR'S CHOICE

By Ron Edelstein

I'm sorry to announce that our regular editor, Rose Berkowitz, was recently in the hospital (she's home now and resting) and unable to do the newsletter this month. As an interim, I will be putting out the newsletter until Rose is able to return and do her usual bang up job. So bear with me and let's have some fun. Due to technical issues, the format for the ALG will be different from the way Rose publishes it. When it returns to her care, she will resume her own polished format.

I'm always glad to hear from you. You can send in comments/reactions to newsletter items, ideas, poetry, essays, or whatever else you'd like to contribute. If you tried a recipe we published, tell us how you liked it. No particular word limit, but emailed submissions are appreciated. Send them to [editor@lsm.us.mensa.org](mailto:editor@lsm.us.mensa.org).

In this issue you will find an announcement for the election of next year's Board of Officers for LSM. If you have thought in the past that you didn't want to get involved because "its the same old clique that runs things", join the clique. If you don't like the way LSM is run, get on the Board and change it! Typically we have trouble getting enough candidates to have a real election--i.e. a choice, and so few vote that a single vote could change the election. So run for an office, or at least vote when the time comes! If there are not enough candidates to fill all the positions, then everyone who runs will be elected by default.

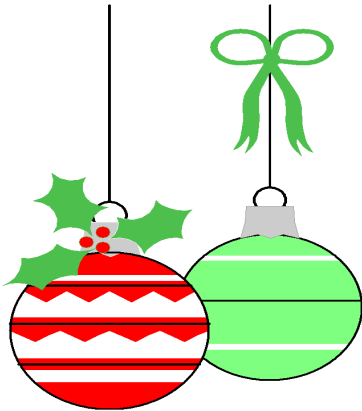


# Holiday Party

**WHAT:** Lone Star Mensa Holiday Party

**WHEN:** Saturday, December 14 from 7 to 10pm

**WHERE:** Howson Hall, First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin, 4700 Grover Avenue, Austin, TX



Come join us for Lone Star Mensa's annual Holiday Party. We'll have more space this year, which will hopefully encourage people to mix and mingle. We'll be serving beverages, hors d'oeuvres, and desserts; it should be enough food for a meal, but served as finger food, again to encourage mixing rather than sitting eating a meal.

We'll be having a white elephant gift exchange. Gifts for the gift exchange should be a gently used, re-gifted, or unusual item, wrapped, and something that you'd reasonably guess at least a few Mensans would enjoy or be amused by. If you're buying something, we suggest no more than perhaps \$10. Everyone participating will draw numbers. Each person may either pick a wrapped gift or steal a gift from someone else; gifts can only be stolen 3 times. If your gift is stolen, you may steal a different gift, or open another wrapped gift. It's lots of fun and we encourage everyone to participate.

Tickets to the Holiday Party are \$5; kids 9-17 are \$2.50, and under 9 are free. Please RSVP to me at [john@neemidge.net](mailto:john@neemidge.net) or 512-310-7863, so that we can keep count of how many people will be attending (RSVPs are NOT required, but are strongly encouraged; they really do help us with planning). We encourage everyone to break out their holiday finery and come join us for an evening of Mensan company and merriment

## A Word To the Wise

by John Neemidge



Happy Holidays to you all! As I mentioned last month, Lone Star Mensa will be hosting a Holiday Party on Saturday the 14th of December, from 7-10 pm. It'll be held at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin, which is located not far from Central Market North. This is the same location where we held the party last year, and is a nice facility with plenty of parking

and space for people to meet and mingle. We had a great time last year and I hope this year's party will be even better. We're charging \$5 for the party (RSVP information is in the holiday party announcement), and will provide beverages, hors d'oeuvres, and desserts -- you won't leave hungry (unless you want to). We'll also be having a gift exchange; we hope everyone will participate. I really hope you'll come join us; if you're new to the group, or just new to attending events, this is a great chance to come out and meet many of us in person. If you're not new, come out and see old friends -- and make some new ones!

As the year winds down, we're finishing up what's been a successful 2013 and looking forward to an even better -- and very busy -- 2014.

Next month I'll go much more into what 2014 has in store for us, but just briefly -- Mind Games, LonestaRG XVI, new website and online presence, increased activity, lots of planned member outreach activities, plus many ongoing events. 2013 has been busy as well. LonestaRG XV was a success with lots of happy attendees -- thanks to Linda and Ron Edelstein for chairing, and to the many volunteers who contributed to it. Games Night is back and enjoyed by many. We've seen signs of increased activity in the group -- more volunteers, more contributions to the newsletter, more discussion, more local members attending regional and national events and active on national forums, etc. We had Monthly Meetings with interesting speakers, picnic outings with good attendance, TGITs, Eclectic Eats, and more. Thank you to everyone who contributed in ways big or small to Lone Star Mensa in 2013 -- we value everything you do! And thank you to everyone who attended our events, whether just one or many -- as a social organization, every person who comes out to be social adds to the value of the organization for everyone.

What we as volunteers do, we do for the membership. Thanks everyone for the 2013 that's winding down -- and please do come join us in December to ring out the year -- and get ready for a big 2014!

## From the RVC

### *From the RVC:*

If you think this column sounds suspiciously familiar, there's a reason for that: this is a repeat of my December column from two years ago, but it is still timely and, in my opinion, bears repeating. The information about the Board meeting has been updated.



Well, here it is December again, and that means the annual Mensa scholarship competition is getting into full swing. If you (or someone close to you) should happen to be looking for tuition assistance at a college or university next fall, there's still time to get your entry in. The Mensa Foundation awards a number of scholarships in amounts up to \$1,000 for applicants who can write a persuasive short essay on the subject of why they deserve financial support in achieving their educational goals. All entries are sent to a central location, and then distributed to local groups for the initial round of judging. Most local groups have a scholarship chair who arranges a judging session for whatever are assigned to them, which may be entries from their own local area, or sometimes from a neighboring local group which doesn't participate in the program. The local scholarship chair begins by numbering each essay and then separating it from its cover sheet so they will all be anonymous (contest rules prohibit any identifying information on the essay itself).

The local judges rank each essay according to a carefully-designed point system, and the winning entries are forwarded to a regional judging session. Many groups have a local scholarship fund from which they award additional scholarships. Here in North Texas, we have a separately-incorporated scholarship foundation which funds two \$1,000 scholarships each year.

While you're out buying stuff for Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa, the Winter Solstice, or whatever holiday you choose to celebrate this time of year, I hope you'll set aside a little extra for the Mensa Foundation and/or your group's local scholarship program. Gifts to the Foundation are generally tax-deductible; gifts to your local program may or may not be, depending on the group. If you're feeling really generous, your accountant or tax attorney can tell you whether or not you can benefit from a major tax-deductible gift.

However, even if, like many of us, you are suffering from the ravages of the current economic downturn, and don't feel you can afford to contribute financially, you can still be of assistance to this worthwhile program. Call your local group's Scholarship Chair and volunteer to be a judge. The essays are occasionally moving, always interesting, and frequently hilarious. The judging is usually done in one afternoon, in the company of a dozen or more of your fellow Ms, and many people enjoy it so much that they come back year after year. If your group doesn't have a Scholarship Chair, you could volunteer to do the job yourself next year; complete instructions will be provided.

Whatever you decide, please accept my best wishes for a joyful holiday season and a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year. The Board of Directors will be meeting in West Palm Beach on December 7, and I hope to have some thought-provoking news for you next month.

*Roger Durham*



*Logic is the art of going wrong with confidence.*

# Mind Games in Austin

Lone Star Mensa is hosting Mind Games over Easter weekend April 18 - 20th 2014 at the Airport Hilton in Austin, 800-584-5091. Mind Games is a national gathering where attendees judge games. The winning games are awarded the Mensa Select Seal which they display proudly on their packages and web sites. If you like table top games, this is the gathering for you. You will be given a list of about 30 games to play and judge. You score each game on criteria set by American Mensa.

Registration is limited to 300, and we are nearly halfway full already!

You can register online  
<http://www.mindgames.us.mensa.org/register/player-registration>

Cost is \$85 through December 31, 2013 and \$90 thereafter (includes 3 catered meals). For more information contact Patsy Graham, [MGChair@mindgames.us.mensa.org](mailto:MGChair@mindgames.us.mensa.org) or call 888-294-8035 Ext 5532.



## Featured Recipe

by Ron Edelstein

This simple, comforting meal is perfect for a busy night. After a hard day's work--or whatever you do during the day, the last thing you want to do when you get home is cook. Here's the Easiest-Ever Pumpkin Soup recipe.

### Five Minute Pumpkin Soup

From the *Good Housekeeping* test kitchen

#### Ingredients:

- 1 med. onion, grated on a box grater
- 1 (29-oz.) can pure pumpkin
- 2 (14.5-oz.) cans chicken broth
- 1/2 c. heavy cream
- 1 to 2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice



This simple, comforting meal is a real lifesaver when you're in a pinch (or feeling lazy) -- it's ready in 5 minutes and 100x tastier than soup from a can. Forget any chopping or blending: Just warm grated onions in olive oil, then mix in pumpkin puree, chicken broth, spices and a little cream until it simmers. That's it! If you don't want to use cream, feel free to swap in half-and-half or a little Greek yogurt at the very end (off of the heat so it doesn't curdle).

If you have a spare minute and feel like getting snazzy, top the soup with parsley and freshly ground pepper. Or toss in a handful of packaged croutons. Who doesn't love those? In fact, top this soup with whatever you want! Bacon? Snipped Chives? Toasted walnuts? It's your easy dinner, you decide. Here's how you make it: Serves 4.

## Change You Can See

by Ron Edelstein

Did you know that the United States Mint has never made a penny? Of course the U.S. Mint, the official agency of the United States government for producing coins, has made a lot of money for the government, both literally, in the production of coins for commerce and collectors, and in seigniorage. Seigniorage is the term used for the difference between the cost of making a coin and its issued face value. In the old days, when coins were required to have their face value in silver or gold, the seigniorage was usually only a few cents per coin. Now, of course, where there is no intrinsic value in modern coins, this is hugely more profitable.

Now, back to those pennies: of course the U.S. Mint has produced billions of one cent coins over the years since it first set up business in 1792, but they are “cents”, not pennies. Why do we persist in calling them pennies? The penny was a British coin commonly used by the American colonists, Pennies and half pennies were probably the most commonly circulating coins of the Colonies. When the United States gained its independence from Great Britain, one of the first things it did, as all new countries do, was design a new flag, establish its own Customs Service—and declare its own new money. Thanks to Mr. Thomas Jefferson, the Americans decided to dump the old British system of 12 pence to the shilling and 20 shillings to the pound (21 shillings to the guinea)

and go to the simpler decimal system. This was a new and novel idea...no one had done that before! So the Congress, on Jefferson's recommendation, established the dollar (from the German word “thalar”) as the new unit of currency and broke it down into “dimes” (tenths of dollars, pronounced “deems” --later changed to “dime” as we know it today) and “cents”, one-hundredths of a dollar (from “century” or one hundred). Early on there were also half-cent coins, until 1857, when their buying power diminished to the point they were no longer practical and were discontinued.

So there you have it. The U.S. Mint has always made cents, but we still persist, some two hundred forty years later, in calling them “pennies”, though they have no relationship to the British coin of the same name. And Canadians, who also turned to the decimal dollar when they established their own coinage in 1867, also call the copper pieces “pennies”. Ironically, in 1970, the United Kingdom followed the lead of its American colonies—and practically everyone else in the world by that time—in changing the venerable British pound to decimal, with 100 new pence to the pound. In October of last year, Canada finally ceased issuing cent coins--the U.S. has been considering that for over 35 years now, but nothing substantive has ever come of it.

## YOUR SUDOKU PUZZLE

	1	2		9				
8			6					
		3		7	1	2		
		9	7			4		2
	3						6	
2		6			3	1		
			4	6		9		
					2			4
				3		5	7	

**Weekly Extremes**  
<http://www.sudoku.com>  
 By Douglas Yee

Each Sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing. Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, and every 3x3 square.

*The cruelest lies are often told in silence.  
 ...Robert Louis Stevenson*

# Board Minutes

## November Board Minutes

by Don Drumtra, acting Scribe

The November regular meeting of the Lone Star Mensa Board of Officers convened at 7:15 PM, Thursday, March 7, 2013 at Carver Public Library, Rooms 2-3, 1161 Angelina, Austin, TX.

Attending were **Don Drumtra, Johnnie Vaughn, Sean Medley, and Douglas Yee**. The board elected Don as Chairman and secretary pro tem and adopted the agenda for the meeting. The agenda is available on the Website with other documents referenced in the minutes.

**Reports.** The board received the following officer reports:

- LocSec: Don announced that our application for a meeting room at the Carver Branch Library and been approved and that room 2 will be scheduled for our use on the dates and times listed in our 2014 Calendar of Events.
- Treasurer: Current checking account balance is \$8750,56.
- ComComm: Don reported that annual mailing report was accepted by USPS and published in the November newsletter. The December newsletter paper work needed to be submitted twice because of a volume and issue number error.
- EdComm. Michael reported that the scholarship process is well underway with 40 submissions so far.
- MemComm: No testing activity was reported.
- SymComm. The November meeting featured a Tai Chi instructor.
- Website Working Group: Patsy reported that design work is progressing.
- Mind Games Committee. Patsy reported that there are 138 registrants and over \$10,000 received. The next committee meeting is November 13.

**Actions.** The board:

- Established the Nomination and Election Committees as special committees with charter to nominate and elect Officers of the LSM Board for 2014-2015 and 2014-2016 according to the Bylaws and Standing Rules
- Appointed Linda Edelstein as Chairman of the two committees and postponed consideration of appointment of the remaining committee members until the next board meeting
- Adopted the Election calendar for the 2013-2014 election subject to committee changes as needed to meet Bylaws and Standing Rule requirements
- Appointed Don as Secretary of the Board pro tem for duties listed for the Board Secretary in the elections calendar
- Adopted the 2014 Calendar of Regular Monthly Meetings and Events
- Postponed until the December meeting consideration of a motion to require standing committee chairmen to attend at least one regular board meeting a quarter
- Accepted the resignation of Angela Adams as Symposia Chairman effective November 30 subject to her submitting a letter of resignation and articles to the newsletter.

**Announcements:**

The next regular monthly Board meetings are scheduled for 7:15-8:15 PM Thursday, December 5 and January 2 at the Carver Branch Library Room 2

- The next regular membership meetings are scheduled for December 9, and January 14, 6:45-8:15 PM at the Carver Branch Library.

**Adjourned:** 8:05 PM



*Am I not destroying my enemies when I make friends of them?*

*-Abraham Lincoln*

# Board Minutes (Cont'd)

## October Board Minutes

by John Neemidge, acting Scribe

The October regular meeting of the Lone Star Mensa board of officers convened at 7:25 PM, Thursday, Oct 3, 2013 at Carver Public Library, Rooms 2-3, 1161 Angelina, Austin, TX. Attending were Tami Heaton, John Neemidge, Douglas Yee, and Johnnie Vaughn.

The board adopted the agenda and the minutes of the September regular board meeting as printed on page 4 of the October *Armadillo Literary Gazette*. The *Gazette* is available on the LSM Website and paper copies are available on request.

The board received the following officer reports and took the following actions:

- LocSec: John briefly discussed the LocSec Workshop action plan.
- ComComm: Tami is still learning the role of ComComm Chair. Mailing went well this month. Tami has agreed to become managing editor of the ALG.
- MemComm: No major updates in October.
- SymComm: Tami suggested a potential speaker topic – working with Amanda Lacy about accessibility for the blind.
- LonestaRG 2014 Committee: The committee is working on a hotel search. Bids are coming in but they are not competitive so far.
- Website Working Group: Tami presented an extensive overview of the proposed website and other online points of contact. The Board approved the overview. Tami has reserved a number of contact addresses on e.g. Facebook, Google+, Twitter, etc for LSM. Working with American Mensa's Name&Logo Committee to make sure everything we have done is proper. The Board passed a motion budgeting up to \$150/year for web hosting, with discretion to the ComComm Chair to pick a hosting vendor. The current plan is to begin actually building the site in early November, depending on Tami's professional schedule. Content loading for the site will be split out to multiple people once the template is built and working.
- Mind Games Committee: We have 176 room nights reserved as of Sep 5 and 111 Mind Games registrations as of Aug 31, 2013. Both numbers are at or above expectations.

Announcements:

- The next monthly board meeting was scheduled for 7:15-8:15 PM, Thursday, Nov 7, and Thursday, Dec 5 at the Carver Branch Library.
  - The next regular monthly meetings are scheduled for 6:45-8:15 PM, Monday, Oct 14, and Monday, Nov 4 at the Carver Branch Library.
- The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.



*Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in.*  
-Alan Alda

**Anatomy of a Suicide: A profile of great courage**

Not so very long ago, in the beautiful rolling plains country called West Texas, lived a man whose life -- and death -- were so compelling that his story begs to be examined in its entirety. This person committed suicide by shooting himself, alone in his automobile, on a public street some distance from his residence. The deceased was financially comfortable, had a lovely wife and adult children, was extremely well respected by his colleagues, friends, and the community in general. He was active in many civic functions including the local symphony and theater. The media coverage that was accorded to the man following his suicide didn't begin to touch on the depth and meaning of the enormous sacrifice made by this person. Beneath the surface of this tale of a suicide lies an insight and speculation into the orderly mind of the deceased, what prompted him to take the action of terminating his existence, and why he did so in the manner he did. Let's begin the analysis with some assumed information regarding the situation. Let's keep in mind that this is a hypothetical discussion of an act of self-termination, the circumstances leading up to it, and the consequences flowing from it; and the viewpoints expressed are solely those of the author and do not intentionally bear relevance to any persons living or deceased.

Why would any person -- financially successful, with a lovely family, an outstanding pillar of his community, loved and esteemed by many, many people (more than 500 friends and colleagues attended a memorial service) -- decide one night to bid his wife and family good night, saying he had some matters to attend to, drive himself some distance from his residence, and in the dark of night, alone, end his life with a gunshot?

Those sparse details, as reported in the media, simply do not satisfactorily explain the motivations behind the actions. Why step into eternity alone instead of within the comfort of his family at hand? Why in a strange neighborhood instead of the familiar surroundings of his own residence? Why with the finality of a messy gunshot wound instead of gentler chemical means? Why not drink some lethal potion and leave it to do its job instead of having to pull the trigger on yourself? All legitimate questions, all beg an explanation.

To begin at the beginning: the US Declaration of Independence specifically states that every citizen of the country has the "unalienable right to .....life....." This is a sacrosanct right that cannot be taken away for any reason unless by war, conviction of proscribed criminal activity, or other exceptions. In other words, we have a right to keep on breathing and functioning for as long as we can. Only when our body quits on its own do we lose the "right to life."

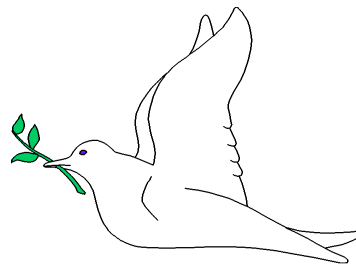
But, wait! That language just doesn't go far enough!! Why can it not be argued that if we have a right to live, we also have a right to end that life. Death and dying are a natural part and consequence of the process of living. If the life belongs to us, so also does the death. So, why should anybody -- a person or a society -- decree that while you may own the right to live, you do not own the right to die? That seems hypocritical and oxymoronic! Are we, as humans, so afraid of death that we have a societal pressure to pass laws against the form of death brought on by self-termination?

Yet, the outlawing of self-termination occurs in many States and places in the world. Texas is one such State that feels the need to make self-termination illegal. According to the website *Texas Euthanasia Laws*, Texas Code 166.45-51, "Mercy killing or euthanasia is not condoned by Texas law, nor is any act or omission other than to allow the natural process of dying." Thus, since it's pointless to charge a decedent with self-termination, it becomes necessary to charge anyone else who may aid or abet that situation. And, it's conceivable that charges could be brought even if a person is merely present in the same room or merely has foreknowledge that the act was going to occur and took no action to prevent or stop it.

There's more! Texas Civil Forfeiture law allows authorities to seize your home, car, cash or other property upon the mere suspicion that these things have been used or involved in criminal activity. Civil forfeiture is a legal fiction that permits authorities to charge the property with a crime and does not require owners to be convicted of a crime; criminal forfeiture requires conviction of a crime for property to be seized.

Now, let's draw some lines and bring together all the dots in this discussion. Why would any person, bent on self-termination, take themselves away from the comfort of their residence and the love of their family, saying nothing to anyone about his intentions, and drive himself to some lonely, dark place to end his life? That's really asking a lot of someone to do. But, I opine that the subject of this essay had precisely these last thoughts in his mind prior to the fateful event: he chose to remove himself from his dwelling and the arms of his loved ones so that they would not -- could not -- be threatened with any civil or criminal litigation.

Can there be any greater act of courage than that??





# Members Write

## HAVING THE LADIES TO LUNCH

By Jane Thompson

The three African-American ladies, all in their sixties, were dressed in their best. They wore sensible shoes, their best dresses, little hats with veils, and white cotton gloves as they walked from the bus stop up the tree-shaded walk to our house that hot Saturday afternoon in the early 1960s. The neighbors stared in true astonishment from their porches and as they watered their lawns.

My great-grandfather owned a big horse farm in Kentucky during the Civil War. He handled the war in a practical way; he was in a border area and whenever either army threatened he had his slaves move the horses to the woods, then swore that the last troop through had taken his horses and his slaves had run off. He made it through the war with horses and slaves intact. At the war's end, he told his slaves they were free to go, but if they wanted to stay they could work for room and board; he would pay wages when he was able. They all stayed; the farm was their home, too.

My grandmother was born in 1876. Her nannies were black; she was taught to cook truly Southern dishes (check out the NTM website under "Boring Stories" for two of her recipes) and to sew beautifully by former slaves. She didn't get much formal education, after all, she was female and this was Kentucky, whose Board of Education had a motto: "Thank God for Arkansas!" She got three months of schooling for six years and basically learned to read, write, and cipher. She also imbibed the prevailing idea that blacks were inherently inferior; no white person who owned slaves could believe otherwise, for how could he or she own human beings as slaves unless he or she harbored that belief? And, of course, she learned the steps to the intricate social caste system of blacks and whites.

But she also learned to be a gracious Southern lady. That entailed treating everyone, black or white, with courtesy and in accordance with the golden rule. She continued her education on her own the rest of her life, through reading and keeping up with events. And she learned tremendous life lessons. When she was sixteen, she eloped with a charming man who promised her the moon but gave her a sod hut on the spare Oklahoma plains, three children, and grief. He taught her to rely on herself when women were supposed to depend on a man; to stand on her own two feet and support her children herself. Later she married another man who gave her four more children and uncertainty. Again, she was responsible for herself and the children. And, of course, she developed a great sense of humor about the vagaries of life. My grandmother learned to depend on other women for love and support. She had a tremendous circle of women friends and loyal customers; and she never lost a daughter-in-law. If her son was foolish enough to divorce his wife, that didn't mean that she had to cut off relations with a woman she had learned to love. When one of her sons died, his widow

brought her fiance to Mary before she remarried; she wasn't about to take the plunge without my grandmother's approval of her chosen.

In the 1960's the Civil Rights Revolution began. My grandmother followed it closely in the newspaper and it made her think. By now she was 85; a little old to be changing her attitudes, one might believe. But change them she did. She discussed the issues with my father and mother and began to believe that the ideas she was raised with in the last century were not right. And she felt that she had wronged people.

In the teens and twenties, Mary Thompson owned a shop in Oklahoma City where anyone who was anybody came to have her clothes made. My grandmother employed three black women who sewed with her to keep up with the demand. She felt that she had paid them the prevailing wage and treated them fairly but--following the social customs of the time, she always ate lunch separately from her employees. Now she felt guilty about treating them so badly.

She told my mother she had to make it up to them. She wrote each of them a note inviting them and we had the ladies to lunch--long before it was customary to I invite African-Americans to one's home socially. The neighbors were agog. But my grandmother felt much better; she felt that she had righted a wrong she had done her employees. Not much of a step in the Civil Rights Revolution--or was it?



*"Birmingham [Alabama] was odd. It was completely segregated. But the black community built its own world. I went to ballet classes and took French lessons and etiquette classes. My father had a picture of me when I was about four sitting on Santa Claus's lap and I have this really odd look on my face, and I wonder if that's because I'd never been that close to a white person before."*

..... **Condoleezza Rice**

## More Change You Can See

by Ron Edelstein

Who looks closely at a one cent coin these days? Well, if you are a collector you may, but otherwise most people pay little attention to them. Did you know that the lowly one cent piece underwent a significant change in 2009? That is the one hundredth anniversary of the Lincoln cent and the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, and the Congress ordered a special set of designs to commemorate the event. Four reverse designs were issued during the course of the year, representing the four stages of Lincoln's life. The first, showing a log cabin, represented his humble birth in such an abode. The next shows Lincoln as a young man, sitting on a log with an ax beside him, studying a book—the “rail splitter” studying. The third shows him as a young politician, standing in front of the Illinois State Capitol, and the last, the unfinished U.S. Capitol dome, representing his Presidency and the unfinished business of the Civil War when he died.



Unfortunately, the Federal Reserve Bank made no provision for the coins to be distributed to the commercial banks, so relatively few have gone into circulation. They will trickle out as banks request more cents for commercial purposes and they get mixed into the general inventory of all cents. Some have shown up in circulation, but only sporadically and without pattern. As has been the custom in the past, they are issued by both the Philadelphia Main Mint and the Denver Branch Mint, with the respective “P” and “D” mint marks. Proof versions with the “S” mint mark for San Francisco, are included with the 2009 proof sets, available by direct purchase from the Mint.

Beginning in 2010, the coin will take another change, and this one will be permanent. The old Lincoln Memorial design for the reverse, on the coin since 1958, is gone and a new Federal shield replaces it. This design, somewhat retro to the designs of the Civil War days, will be the standard from now on, for at least the next 25 years or until the coin is discontinued, a step that has been considered many times over the past few years since its purchasing power has diminished to practically nothing and it now costs the government more to make the coin than it is worth. The obverse, with Lincoln's portrait by the 19th century artist Victor David Brenner, will continue unchanged as it has been since the first production of the coin in 1909.



Trivia bit: Did you know that the Lincoln cent, issued for the 100 anniversary of his birth in 1909, was the first circulating U.S. coin to ever feature the picture of an actual person? Prior to that, only allegorical figures of Liberty had been used. There was a special commemorative half dollar issued in 1892-1893 for the Columbian expedition, which featured Christopher Columbus, and a quarter dollar with Queen Isabella, but those were sold at a premium to collectors and were not intended as circulating pieces.

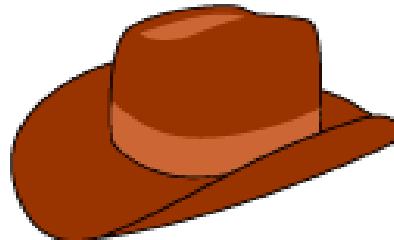
## Election Time Again!

by Linda Edelstein, Chair, Elections Committee

(No, not that one for Washington, this is closer to home--Lone Star Mensa!) It is time to begin the process of filling the empty seats on the Board of Officers for April 2014 through March 2015. There are eight positions to be filled—four for a one year term and four for a two year term (2014-2016). There are two ways you can nominate yourself or someone else. First, to be considered for nomination by the Nomination Committee, email the name & email address of the member to [ledelstein@mindspring.com](mailto:ledelstein@mindspring.com).

Second, in order to be directly added to the ballot, you must submit a petition with ten LSM member signatures to me at the same email address. All nominees must be LSM members in good standing (dues paid up) and willing to serve. Nominations must be received by December 5.

In order to have a true election, we need at least nine people who are willing to give one evening a month to meeting with other board members to plan activities and take care of the business of Lone Star Mensa. If fewer than nine candidates are found, those who are nominated will be considered elected by default as of the first of the year. If you have questions about what the job entails, you can contact any of the board members listed in this edition of the newsletter and they will be glad to talk with you.



## November Member Meeting

November's member meeting occurred one week earlier than usual, on November 4, due to the Veterans Day holiday on November 11. Mensan Lee Wedlake gave a presentation on Tai Chi to eleven fitness-minded fellow members (+1 pint-sized future Mensan). We learned about this Chinese martial art, and how it can be used to relieve stress and promote optimum health. Recent recognition of tai chi's many health benefits and gentle, low impact movements have made the graceful exercise very popular in hospitals and community and senior centers around the country. Tai chi may also be used as a form of self-defense.

*The problem with political jokes is they get elected.  
...Henry Cate, VI*

## Members Comment

Hi Rose,

As usual, you did a good job in putting the LSM newsletter together. I appreciate it and wish to thank you again for your efforts.

I imagine that you anticipated that there would be a number of comments about this issue. Here are mine: There was a statement in this month's issue that I found to be quite thought provoking: "By now you have probably all heard that Mensa has a new policy prohibiting weapons at national Mensa events." I would have thought that Mensa might be a bit more logical about such a statement. Where have many of the mass shootings occurred? I'll answer my own question: in gun-free zones. About one third of all mass shootings have occurred in "gun free" zones. Here is a link that discusses this question (the Washington Post is hardly a conservative "rag"):

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonk-blog/wp/2013/02/02/study-the-u-s-has-had-one-mass-shooting-per-month-since-2009/>

Here is a simple question to ponder: If it is illegal to kill or injure intentionally another person, isn't it naive to think a law or a "gun free policy" is going to stop someone intent on harming others? What better place to look for victims than a place where you know that no one has a weapon to stop you? Chicago and New York both ban ownership of handguns. Here are the results: According to new crime statistics released this week by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Chicago had more homicides in 2012 than any other city in the country. There were 500 murders in Chicago last year, the FBI said, surpassing New York City, which had 419.

Here's another question: How many guns are there in the US? The Congressional Research Service in 2009 estimated there were 310 million firearms in the United States, not including weapons owned by the military. If this were a major problem wouldn't the number be higher? I think it is a good question. For what it's worth, I currently do not own a gun, but if I felt it were necessary to protect myself or my family I wouldn't hesitate to get one. I am a veteran of the Korean War and was trained in the navy to safely handle a number of weapons, e.g., I carried a Smith & Wesson .38 revolver in a shoulder holster on 35 combat flight patrols, and a Colt 1911 .45 semi-automatic pistol every four days when on watch. Guns don't frighten me, but I respect them and handle them safely. It is something to think about, but I doubt that there will be a facile, effective solution, just more political posturing... Thanks again for your efforts...

Tom



I read the editorial about low attendance and wanted to respond. I rarely am aware of what is happening when and where in LSM. Partially it is because of the small number of events each month and partially because they don't make it onto my calendar. The majority of meetings that I attend each month are listed on [meetup.com](http://meetup.com) and that's what drives most of my calendar. So, I would like the board to consider creating a Lone Star Mensa meet-up group and listing the events there.

Thanks!

-- Matt

Effective November 30, 2013, I will be stepping down from my post as the Symposia Chair of Lone Star Mensa. Although I have enjoyed the challenge of organizing social events for a group as varied as ours, I have come to realize over the last six months that I have over-committed myself. For the sake of my health and sanity, I need to cut back on my activities. Thank you for the chance to be your local Symposia Chair.

...Angela

### Amazingly simple home remedies (that really work!)

1. Avoid cutting yourself when slicing vegetables by getting someone else to hold the vegetables while you slice.
2. For high blood pressure sufferers ~ simply cut yourself and bleed for a few minutes, thus reducing the pressure on your veins. Remember to use a timer.
3. A mouse trap placed on top of your alarm clock will prevent you from rolling over and going back to sleep after you hit the snooze button.
4. If you have a bad cough, take a large dose of laxatives.. Then you'll be afraid to cough.
5. You only need two tools in life - WD-40 and duct tape. If it doesn't move and should, use the WD-40. If it shouldn't move and does, use the duct tape.
6. If you can't fix it with a hammer, you've got an electrical problem.

### Daily thought:

Some people are like slinkies - not really good for anything but they bring a smile to your face when pushed down the stairs

# Member News

## HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Mark Watson  
5 Michael Cochran  
5 Arne Hartikka  
5 Jeffery Lee Humphrey  
5 Michael Richards  
6 Michael A Hattamer  
6 John H Merkel  
8 Carla Young  
10 Mary Jane Lockhart  
12 Charles A Espey  
13 Kimberly Buckingham  
13 Jeff Dawson  
13 Heather Hall  
16 Anthony G Cassano  
16 Donna M Kornhaber  
17 Dr Caryl Neman  
18 Gerald L McGray  
18 Margaret Syverson  
18 Ira B Wood III  
19 Sizhan Shi  
20 Ella K Miesner  
21 Ashley N Inbody  
23 Fred G Deats III  
24 Thomas C Haddon III  
25 Christine Amos Linial  
28 Austin G Meyer  
28 Sonya L Palmer  
29 Jack Vincent Musgrove  
30 Merlin D Darling  
30 Mary L Hoane  
31 Michelle Benoit  
31 Katerina Tsisis

## December Anniversaries

### MEMBER FOR 35 YEARS

Howard A Konetchy

### MEMBER FOR 10 YEARS

Keith R Babola  
Juli Eivens  
Ross A Williams

### MEMBER FOR 5 YEARS

Artemis Harbert  
Alejandro A Loayza  
Mark J Thomasson

### MEMBER FOR 1 YEAR

Janis Anderson  
James Bobal  
Kalani Kirk Hausman  
Jennifer L Holt  
Kyle Simpson

### NEW MEMBERS— WELCOME!

Chris Gugleta  
James Gugleta  
Ian Alexander Palmer

### JUST MOVED IN—HI NEIGHBOR!

Katie Blanscet  
Patricia Kay Bowers  
Benjamin Moulton

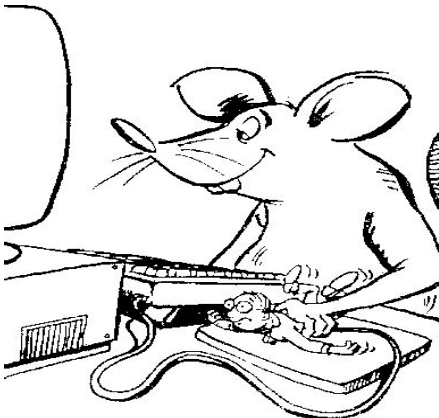
### WELCOME BACK--MISSED YOU!

Alaesa Hearn  
Katherine Phillips

### GOODBYE—MOVING AWAY

Taylor A Donlan  
David Floyd

\* Note: We can't acknowledge your birthday if you've restricted that information in your member profile. To check your member profile, log in to the AML website



*Cats are rather delicate creatures and they are subject to a good many different ailments, but I have never heard of one who suffered from insomnia.*

*...Joseph Wood Krutch*

# LONE STAR MENSA CONTACTS BY FUNCTION

<p><b>NEWSLETTER</b>            Editor (Acting)            Emailing            Snail mailing            Online            Calendar            Publicity            Advertising            Photographer            Managing Editor            Publisher</p>	<p><a href="mailto:editor@lsm.us.mensa.org">editor@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:epostmaster@lsm.us.mensa.org">epostmaster@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:postmaster@lsm.us.mensa.org">postmaster@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:records@lsm.us.mensa.org">records@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:calendar@lsm.us.mensa.org">calendar@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:publicity@lsm.us.mensa.org">publicity@lsm.us.mensa.org</a></p> <p><a href="mailto:editor@lsm.us.mensa.org">editor@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:recsecretary@lsm.us.mensa.org">recsecretary@lsm.us.mensa.org</a></p>	<p>Ron Edelstein            Linda Edelstein            Don Drumtra*            Don Drumtra            Rose Berkowitz            Paul Anderson            Vacant            Vacant            Don Drumtra            Board of Officers</p>	<p>512-491-9881            512-491-9881            512-291-0315            512-291-0315            512-467-4871            512-259-7824            512-291-0315            512-291-0361            512-291-0315            512-288-9172</p>
<p><b>ON LINE</b>            Website Design            Website Maintenance            LSM Officers, contacts            Board Meetings            Operating standards            Email Lists            Facebook</p>	<p><a href="mailto:mensapats@att.net">mensapats@att.net</a>  <a href="mailto:webmaster@lsm.us.mensa.org">webmaster@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:records@lsm.us.mensa.org">records@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:records@lsm.us.mensa.org">records@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:records@lsm.us.mensa.org">records@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:emaillists@lsm.us.mensa.org">emaillists@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:facebook@lsm.us.mensa.org">facebook@lsm.us.mensa.org</a></p>	<p>Patsy Graham            Douglas Yee            Don Drumtra            Don Drumtra            Don Drumtra            Don Drumtra            John Neemidge*            Geri Neemidge</p>	<p>512-380-0141            512-288-9172            512-291-0315            512-291-0315            512-291-0315            512-291-0315            512-310-7863            512-310-7863</p>
<p><b>Election Chair</b></p>	<p><a href="mailto:ledelstein@mindspring.com">ledelstein@mindspring.com</a></p>	<p>Linda Edelstein</p>	<p>512-491-9881</p>
<p><b>MEMBERSHIP</b>            New Members            Renewals            Testing            Awards            Officers</p>	<p><a href="mailto:membership@lsm.us.mensa.org">membership@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:mensapats@lsm.us.mensa.org">mensapats@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:ravina_n@hotmail.com">ravina_n@hotmail.com</a>  <a href="mailto:testing@lsm.us.mensa.org">testing@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:membership@lsm.us.mensa.org">membership@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:records@lsm.us.mensa.org">records@lsm.us.mensa.org</a></p>	<p>Fred Goertz**            Patsy Graham            Ravina Nelson            Austin G. Meyer            Vacant            Don Drumtra</p>	<p>512-569-1758            512-380-0141            512-795-0739            512-971-0123            512-291-0315</p>
<p><b>EDUCATION</b>            Gifted Youth Programs            Scholarship Chair            Asst. Scholarship Chair            Financial Outreach</p>	<p><a href="mailto:giftedchildren@lsm.us.mensa.org">giftedchildren@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:mgrichards@att.net">mgrichards@att.net</a>  <a href="mailto:scholarship@lsm.us.mensa.org">scholarship@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:drumtra@aol.com">drumtra@aol.com</a></p>	<p>Vacant            Michele Vaughan            Michael Richards</p>	<p>512-238-0205            512-291-0315</p>
<p><b>EVENTS</b>  <b>Monthly Programs</b>  <b>TGITS</b>  <b>Games Night</b>  <b>Chess Night</b>  <b>Eclectic Eats</b>  <b>Gen X/Y Events</b>  <b>Area Events Coordinators</b></p>	<p><a href="mailto:drumtra@aol.com">drumtra@aol.com</a>  <a href="mailto:mensapats@lsm.us.mensa.org">mensapats@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:cmvc95@yahoo.com">cmvc95@yahoo.com</a>  <a href="mailto:arabushka@austin.rr.com">arabushka@austin.rr.com</a>  <a href="mailto:carla.x.young@gmail.com">carla.x.young@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>Vacant            Vacant            Don Drumtra            Patsy Graham            Douglas Yee**            Aaron Rabushka            Carla Young            Vacant</p>	<p>512-291-0315            512-380-0141            512-288-9172            512-280-2807            954-465-3498</p>
<p><b>2014 RG CO-CHAIRS</b></p>	<p><a href="mailto:leslielstevenson@gmail.com">leslielstevenson@gmail.com</a>  <a href="mailto:mostquality@austin.rr.com">mostquality@austin.rr.com</a>  <a href="mailto:ombudsman@lsm.us.mensa.org">ombudsman@lsm.us.mensa.org</a>  <a href="mailto:treasurer@lsm.us.mensa.org">treasurer@lsm.us.mensa.org</a></p>	<p>Leslie Stevenson            &amp; Johnnie Vaughn            Ron Edelstein*            Don Drumtra**            Vacant</p>	<p>979-599-3555            512-867-5658            512-491-9881            512-291-0315</p>
<p><b>OMBUDSMAN</b>  <b>REIMBURSEMENTS</b>  <b>S.I.G.H.T.</b>  <b>EVERYTHING ELSE</b></p>	<p><a href="mailto:locsec@lsm.us.mensa.org">locsec@lsm.us.mensa.org</a></p>	<p>Vacant            John Neemidge**</p>	<p>512-310-7863</p>
<p>* Experienced members who've worked with the National Office (NO) and the American Mensa Committee (AMC), and can help members navigate both.            ** LSM board members: John Neemidge, Don Drumtra, Douglas Yee, and Fred Goertz</p>			

# December Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5 Board Mtg	6	7
8	8	10	11	12 ALG dead- line TGIT North Chess night	13	14 LSM Holi- day Party
15	16	17	18	19 TGIT South, Seal & Label	20	21 Games Night
22	23	24	25	26 TGIT North	27	28
29	30	31 New Year's Eve Party				

## Member Meeting

No member meeting in December. The Holiday party serves that purpose

## Board Meeting

1st Thursday  
Nov. 7, 7:15-8:15 pm  
Carver Branch Library.

## Chess Night

2nd Thursday  
Nov. 14, 6-8 PM  
Bring your chess sets if you have them.  
Hosted by Douglas Yee.

## ALG/Calendar Deadline

2nd Thursday  
Nov. 14, Midnight  
Submissions due to Editor.

**Holiday Party** - December 14th See page 2

**New Year's Eve Party** - see page 15

## Games Night

3rd Saturday  
Nov. 16, 7-10 pm  
Café Express  
3418 N. Lamar, Austin  
Bring a game or just show up. Café Express has  
buy a meal to sit with us! Family and friends &  
the behavior of any children you bring.)

Eclectic Eats will take a holiday for December

## Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT-South)

3rd Thursday  
Nov. 21, 6:00-8:00 PM  
Join us for conversation, food, and fun. Prospe

## Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT-North)

Dec. 12 & 26, 6-8 PM  
Meet us upstairs at the Café for conversa-  
tion, food and fun. Prospective members  
welcome

## Seal & Label

Dec. 26, 6-8 PM  
Join the TGIT Group to help seal  
and label the newsletter.

## UPCOMING IN JANUARY

Jan 2, LSM Board, Carver Branch Library  
Jan 6 RMM, Carver Branch Library  
Jan 9 TGIT, Central Market North  
Jan 9 Newsletter input due, email  
Jan 0 Calendar input due  
Jan 16 TGIT, Central Market South  
Jan 23 TGIT, Central Market North  
Jan 23 S&L, Central Market North]

# Event Directions

**Board and Member Meetings**—Carver Public Library, Rooms 2-3 1161 Angelina, Austin 512-974-1010 Between 11th and 12th Streets, east of I-35. This location allows direct access to the library from 183 and 130 via FM 969 MLK and 12th Street.

**TGIT-North, Chess Night, Seal & Label**—Central Market Café North at Central Park 4001 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin 512-206-1020. East of N. Lamar between 38 and 44 Streets; on the south side of the store. Look for the Mensa table sign—usually we're upstairs on the Mezzanine.

**TGIT-South**—Central Market Café South at Westgate Mall: 4477 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin 512-899-4300 On the south side of the S. Lamar access road (the south access road of I-290/SR71) between Westgate Blvd. and Frontier Trail. Enter at the east side of the store by the statues of fruits and vegetables.

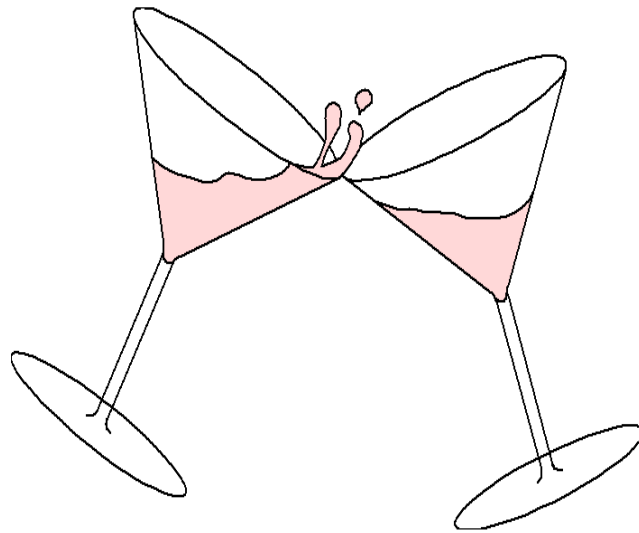
*"Sometimes a man wants to be stupid if it lets him do a thing his cleverness forbids."*

— John Steinbeck

## *New Year's Eve Party*

**December 31, 8 pm to 1 am at the Edelsteins', 1439 Dapplegrey Lane., Austin 78727. Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share and BYOB if you want anything other than soft drinks or beer. We will have a ham and other sandwich makings available. Space is limited, so RSVP please to**

[ledelstein@mindspring.com](mailto:ledelstein@mindspring.com)



*"The opposite of a fact is falsehood, but the opposite of one profound truth may very well be another profound truth."  
....Niels Bohr*

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Calendar submissions may be sent to  
[calendar@lsm.us.mensa.org](mailto:calendar@lsm.us.mensa.org)

The acting editor's snail mail address is  
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Austin, TX 78727

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### PUBLICATION NOTICES

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Submissions of all types are encouraged. The deadline is the second Thursday of each month. Submissions may be by email (preferred) or by snail mail in typed format. Anonymous submissions are not accepted, although the author's identity may be withheld upon request. The editor reserves the right to edit for clarity and length. Items in this newsletter may be reprinted in other Mensa publications, with credit given, unless restricted by the author.

Calendar inputs may be submitted at any time and will normally be published online within three days and in the next month's printed calendar if received before the cut-off date. The cut-off date is the second Thursday of the previous month.

Advertising may be accepted subject to space limitations. Lone Star Mensa members may submit 2 noncommercial ads per year at no charge, limited to 4 column line maximum. Publication dates are subject to editor's discretion. Business-card-sized ads (2" x 3") are \$10 for one month, \$25 for three months, and \$40 for six months. Rates for other sized ads or other time periods are available upon request. Ads must be camera-ready, accurately sized, and should be submitted via email in Microsoft Word (preferred, DOC or DOCX), JPG, or PDF format. The deadline for ad submissions to the newsletter editor is 5 days before the general newsletter deadline. Publication may be delayed due to space limitations and may be edited to meet publication standards.



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